## Ranking Tool Summary for FY2014 - Water Quality Degradation surface/groundwater (Released 01/11/2014)

Description:
The Water Quality Degradation, surface and groundwater ranking tool is a statewide commitment to help producers accelerate efforts to improve water quality in Nebraska. A maximum of 3 resource concerns can be identified for each practice selected. Practice numbers 316, 350, 351, 359, 360, 386, 393, 521, 578, 590, 595, 633, 634, 635 and 638 are the primary practices to address these resource concerns.
Land Uses:
Associated Agriculture Land, Crop, Farmstead, Forest, Pasture, Range
Efficiency Score:
Scoring Multiplier: 1.000
Optional Notes:
National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.000 Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
2	a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
2	b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d, etc.)?	15
2	c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?	5
3	a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?	15
3	b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10
3	c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5
4	a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
4	b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO2 (Carbon Dioxide), CH4 (Methane), and N2O (Nitrous Oxide)?	15
4	c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	5
5	a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15
5	b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?	5
6	a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15
6	b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	10
7	a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10
7	b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?	10
7	c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?	5
7	d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10
7	e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?	10
7	f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?	5
8	a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15
8	b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP?	10
8	c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?	10
9	a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?	10
9	b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?	5
9	c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?	5
	Total Points	500

## **State Issues:**

Scoring Multiplier: 1.130 Questions:

Sub- heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other state level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	400
	2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the application of Nutrient Management on all cropland contract acres?	48
	3	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the application of Nutrient Management on at least 50% of cropland contract acres?	24
	4	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in conversion from cropland to permanent perennial vegetation (wildlifeland, rangeland, pastureland) on all contract acres that were previously utilized as cropland?	23
	5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in adequate treatment of all ephemeral and gully erosion control?	21
	6	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in improved soil quality with the use of either no-till or a resource conserving crop rotation on at least 50% of the land in the contract? See CSP enhancement CCR99 for conserving crop rotation definition.	19
	8	Is the treatment you intend to implement identified in an current farm plan?	15
	9	Will the treatment you intend to implement support the National Soil Health Initiative by including soil health practices such as cover crops (340), no-till (329), conservation crop rotation (328), nutrient management (590) and integrated pest management (595)?	21
	10	If installing terraces with waterways or underground outlets, the cropping system will allow the terraces to be constructed in the summer and a cover crop will be established on these terraces to control erosion until the next planting season (fall if going to wheat or next years spring crop).	25
	11	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP address a targeted water quality issue within the drainage area of any impaired lake / reservoirs listed on the Nebraska Impaired Waters Map. At least 50% of the area must be within the drainage area to score points.	41
	12	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP address a targeted water quality issue within the immediate drainage area (within 1/2 mile)of any impaired stream segment shown on the Nebraska Impaired Waters Map? At least 50% of the area must be within the critical area to score points.	21
	13	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the installation of Conservation Buffers (filter strips, field borders, or riparian forest buffers)?	26

14	If rangeland, will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the conversion of land in expiring CRP contracts to permanent grazing land used in a grazing rotation? (land would need to be fenced, water source in place and be used in a rotation to be eligible for these points. These items would need to exist or be a part of the contract.)	25
15	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in wind and water erosion control to "T" on all cropland in the contract?	22
16	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the closure of a waste impoundment?	15
17	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the collection and use of livestock manure or city sludge from a CNMP for beneficial uses?	19
18	Will the treament you intend to implement using EQIP result in managing riparian areas by implementing a planned grazing system to avoid season long grazing to improve water quality.	14
19	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP include Waste Utilization (633) as a practice?	14
20	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the use of variable rate technologies for nutrient application using computer controlled equipment that adjusts fertilizer application based on management zones or grids?	7
	Maximum Points: Total Points	800

## **Local Issues:**

Scoring Multiplier: 0.800 Questions:

Sub- heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other local level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
	2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the application of nutrient management?	72
	3	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the application of pesticide management?	25
	4	Will a cover crop be utilized on at least 25 percent of the offered cropland acres?	31
	5	If cropland, will livestock be excluded from all streams on the offered acres if crop residues are seasonally grazed?	17
	6	If rangeland, will livestock access to streams be managed on the offered acres? (riparian area fenced, alternate water sources developed to eliminate watering	34

	from the stream, cattle crossing developed if needed, rotational grazing) These items would need to exist or be a part of the contract.	
7	Does the applicant who is applying for EQIP qualify for Limited Resource?	20
8	If the applicant who is applying for EQIP is also a previous/present contract holder or has been associated with a contract, has the applicant ever had a contract out of compliance or modified to reschedule a practice without a defendable meritorious reason? Meritorious reason examples include personal hardship, adverse weather conditions, etc.	-25
9	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in wind and water erosion control to "T" on all cropland in the contract?	24
10	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP benefit local area wide planning activities targeting water quality concerns?	26
11	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP address a targeted water quality issue within the critical area identified in a qualified watershed workplan? At least 50% of the area must be within the critical area to score points	26
	Maximum Points: Total Points	500